

3
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ON PAGE A-10

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Guest columnist

U.S. helped admit Nazi war criminals

BOSTON — Nazi fugitives did not sneak into America. They were brought in on an underground railroad that is still in operation.

After World War II, our State Department sincerely believed that Russia would invade Western Europe. While the Army was hunting down Nazi war criminals, the State Department's spy agency, the OPC, was recruiting every SS intelligence agent it could find.

The result was a collection of right-wing nationalist leaders who had willingly spied for the SS Einsatzgruppen (the mobile killing units) in obliterating those who resisted Nazi rule in Eastern Europe and occupied Russia. Some of the worst war criminals in history worked for OPC, men like Stanislaw Stankievitch, who directed the murder of 6,000 Jews in a single day.

For two years as a Justice Department attorney, I searched the classified vaults of every U.S. intelligence agency reading the sordid documents describing the Nazi connection.

I found to my disgust that virtually the entire Nazi puppet government from Byelorussia found sanctuary in America. Had the State Department not obstructed background checks, they would have found out the truth. Other U.S. intelligence agencies knew these Nazis were working for everyone

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who would pay them, including the Communists.

By the end of the 1950s, proof of widespread communist penetration emerged, and the files were shuffled off to the vaults in embarrassed silence. But the Nazi recruits lived on in America long after the program was dropped. A few still work for the government, hundreds are still alive. Most have been protected from exposure by the agencies that hired them. It would be too embarrassing to admit that Kim Philby, the Soviet mole, convinced our gullible State Department to hire exactly those Nazi groups that Moscow wanted. How the Communists must have laughed.

Obviously, the Russians will not cooperate. Without eyewitnesses, the Justice Department can prosecute only a handful. That leaves it to Congress to make the files public and at least document the extent of the Nazi-smuggling tragedy, a task Congress is singularly reluctant to undertake.

And some of the modern groups being smuggled in (Iranian Savak agents among them, according to *The New York Times*) make the SS look tame by comparison. Our intelligence agencies are making the same mistakes today. It's time to tell Congress, "Never again."